

In the claims:

1           1. (Currently Amended) A system development method for developing a system  
2    using a development-support system made up of a server used to provide information  
3    about functional units each implementing a different function and files describing said  
4    different functions, at least one developer client to develop said functional units and at  
5    least one user client to develop said system configured to perform desired operations by  
6    combining said functional units, wherein all of said server, said at least one developer  
7    client, and said at least one user client are connected through an internet, comprising:

8           a first step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of registering an operator of  
9    said user client as a user of said development-support system ;

10          a second step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of obtaining, by referring  
11    to information about said functional units, files describing a plurality of said functional  
12    units which are needed for development of said system;

13          a third step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of developing said system  
14    by combining files describing said plurality of said functional units;

15          a fourth step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of transmitting question  
16    information about at least one of said functional units or keyword information regarding  
17    information required for development of said system to said server, when said system does  
18    not operate properly due to malfunctions of said at least one of said functional units or  
19    when said information required for development of said system using said at least one of  
20    said functional units is to be acquired; and

21          a fifth step, taken by said server, of:

22          accepting and registering said question information, said registering  
23    including storing said question information in association with said at least one functional  
24    unit, and

25          transmits said question information to said at least one developer client of  
26    said at least one of said functional units;

27 a sixth step, taken by said at least one developer client, of transmitting reply  
28 information to said question information to said server,

29 a seventh step, taken by said server, of registering said reply information, said  
30 registering including storing said reply information in association with said at least one of  
31 said function units,

32 a eighth step of transmitting said reply information to other user clients and other  
33 developer clients who have already acquired said at least one of said functional units and

34 a ~~fifth~~-ninth step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of obtaining, when  
35 necessary, a file of another functional units, based on said reply information to said  
36 question information or on said information retrieved according to said keyword  
37 information and, if necessary, of changing design to ~~have another try of developing~~  
38 ~~develop~~ said system and checking operations of the resulting a developed system.

1 2. (Original) The system development method according to Claim 1, wherein, in  
2 said second step, said files of said plurality of said functional units are allowed to be  
3 obtained only when an application for individual or collective acquisition of said files is  
4 made and a right to acquire said files is granted through examination of the application for  
5 acquisition of each of said functional units or of every collective group of said functional  
6 units.

1 3. (Original) The system development method according to Claim 1, wherein, in  
2 said fourth step, when any question about said functional units that has been already asked  
3 is contained in said question information, a notification informing that said question about  
4 said functional units has been already asked is provided, and other information required for  
5 development of said system is able to be obtained.

1 4. (Currently Amended) The system development method according to Claim  
2 1, wherein said reply information to said question information is additionally transmitted to  
3 ~~each of both said user clients and said developer clients which is operated by a user having~~

4 ~~already acquired said files including a user having transmitted said question information, a~~  
5 user having wanted to obtain said files but having not yet obtained said files and, when  
6 there is a model functional unit that has been used as a model for development of said  
7 functional unit, a user having developed said model functional unit.

1           5. (Currently Amended)     The system development method according to Claim  
2 1, further comprising a ~~sixth-tenth~~ step of transmitting, when said developer of said at least  
3 on of said functional units has found a malfunction of said at least one of said functional  
4 units, contact information notifying that said at least on of said functional units have said  
5 malfunction and information about a method for taking a measure against said  
6 malfunction.

1           6. (Original) The system development method according to Claim 1, wherein said  
2 system is a semiconductor device and said functional unit is a basic logic element or a  
3 basic logic circuit constructed by combining a plurality of said basic logic elements.

1           7. (Original) The system development method according to Claim 1, wherein said  
2 system is a semiconductor device and said functional units include a central processing  
3 unit, storage device, buffer, and peripheral device and wherein a file of said peripheral  
4 device is so constructed as to be able to select either of a file to implement its function by  
5 using hardware or a file to implement its function by using software.

1           8. (Original) The system development method according to Claim 1, wherein said  
2 system is software and said functional units are routines or objects to perform  
3 predetermined processing.

1           9. (Currently Amended)     A storage medium storing system development  
2 program for causing a computer to execute a method for developing a system using a  
3 development-support system made up of a server used to provide information about

4 functional units each implementing a different function and files describing said different  
5 functions, at least one developer client to develop said functional units and at least one user  
6 client to develop said system configured to perform desired operations by combining said  
7 functional units, wherein all of said server, said at least one developer client, and said at  
8 least one user client are connected through an internet, comprising:

9 a first step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of registering an operator of  
10 said user client as a user of said development-support system ;

11 a second step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of obtaining, by referring  
12 to information about said functional units, files describing a plurality of said functional  
13 units which are needed for development of said system;

14 a third step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of developing said system  
15 by combining files describing said plurality of said functional units;

16 a fourth step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of transmitting question  
17 information about said at least one of said functional units or keyword information  
18 regarding information required for development of said system to said server, when said  
19 system does not operate properly due to malfunctions of said at least one of said functional  
20 units or when said information required for development of said system using said at least  
21 one of said functional units is to be acquired; and

22 a fifth step, taken by said server, of:

23 accepting and registering said question information, said registering  
24 including storing said question information in association with said at least one functional  
25 unit, and

26 transmits said question information to said at least one developer client of  
27 said at least one of said functional units;

28 a sixth step, taken by said at least one developer client, of transmitting reply  
29 information to said question information to said server,

30 a seventh step, taken by said server, of registering said reply information, said  
31 registering including storing said reply information in association with said at least one of  
32 said function units,

33 a eighth step of transmitting said reply information to other user clients and other  
34 developer clients who have already acquired said at least one of said functional units and  
35 a fifth-ninth step, to be taken by said at least one user client, of obtaining, when  
36 necessary, a file of another functional units, based on said reply information to said  
37 question information or on said information retrieved according to said keyword  
38 information and, if necessary, of changing design to have another try of developing  
39 develop said system and checking operations of the resulting a developed system.

1 10. (Currently Amended) A development-support system comprising:  
2 a server used to provide information about functional units each implementing a  
3 different function and files describing said different function,  
4 at least one developer client to develop said functional units:  
5 at least one user client to develop a system configured to perform desired  
6 operations by combining said functional units; and  
7 wherein all of said server, said at least one developer client, and said at least one  
8 user client are connected through an internet,  
9 wherein said at least one user client obtains files of a plurality of said functional  
10 units, develops said system by combining files of said plurality of functional units and  
11 checks operations of the developed system and, as a result, when said developed system  
12 does not operate properly due to a malfunction of any one of said functional units,  
13 transmits question information about said malfunction of said malfunctioning functional  
14 unit to said server,  
15 wherein said server, after having accepted and registered said question  
16 information, transmits said question information to said at least one developer client  
17 ~~operated by said developer client of said~~ malfunctioning functional units,  
18 wherein said at least one developer client transmits reply information to said  
19 question information to said server,  
20 wherein said server, ~~after having accepted~~

21                     accepts and registers~~and registered~~ said reply information, said  
22 registering including storing said reply information in association with said malfunctioning  
23 function unit, and,  
24                     transmits said reply information to said at least one user client, other  
25 user clients having registered for said malfunctioning function unit and~~or~~ another  
26 developer client operated by a user having interests in said malfunctioning functional  
27 units.

1            11.    The development-support system according to Claim 10, wherein said at  
2    least one user client makes an application for acquisition of each of a plurality of  
3    functional units or of said plurality of functional units collectively, said server examines  
4    said application for each of said plurality of functional units or for said plurality of  
5    functional units collectively and grants said at least one user client a right to acquire, and  
6    said at least one user client, based on the granted right, obtains files of said functional unit  
7    from said server.

1                    12. (Original)                    The development-support system according to Claim 10,  
2       wherein said server, only when said question information has been registered as coming  
3       from a user of said development-support system and said question information has been  
4       transmitted from a user having obtained files of said functional units, accepts said question  
5       information.

1                    13. (Original)                    The development-support system according to Claim 10,  
2       wherein said server, when having already accepted and registered said question  
3       information about said functional units, registers said question information together with  
4       question information that has been already registered and transmits contents of said  
5       registration to said developer client.

1           14.(Currently Amended)    The development-support system according to Claim  
2   10, wherein said server transmits a date when a reply to said question information should  
3   be made ~~to by~~ said at least one developer client and, if there is no reply by said date,  
4   transmits information urging said at least one developer client to make a reply and, if there  
5   is still no reply even after said date, again transmits information urging said at least one  
6   developer client to make a reply on every predetermined date, ~~to said developer client.~~

1           15. (Currently Amended)   The development-support system according to Claim  
2   14, wherein said server transmits information notifying that a predetermined penalty is  
3   imposed every time said reply is delayed by said one date behind said date or by said  
4   predetermined dates behind said date, together with said information urging said at least  
5   one developer client to make said reply, and an amount equivalent to said penalty is  
6   automatically drawn from a bank account every time said reply is delayed by one date  
7   behind said date or by predetermined dates behind said date.

1           16. (Currently Amended)   The development-support system according to Claim  
2   10, wherein said server accepts said reply information only when said reply information  
3   has been transmitted by a user who has been registered as a user of said development-  
4   support system and who has developed said at least one functional unit.

1           17. (Original)            The development-support system according to Claim 10,  
2   wherein said interested user is a user having obtained said files including a user having  
3   transmitted said question information, a user having wanted to obtain said files but having  
4   not yet obtained said files or, when there is a model functional unit that has been used as a  
5   model for development of said functional unit, a user having developed said model  
6   functional unit.

1           18. (Currently Amended)   The development-support system according to  
2   Claim 10, wherein said developer client transmits, when said developer of said

3 functional unit has found a malfunction of said malfunctioning functional unit, contact  
4 information notifying that said malfunctioning functional unit has said malfunction and  
5 information about a method for taking a measure against said malfunction, to said server.

1 19. (Currently Amended) The development-support system according to Claim  
2 10, wherein said system is a semiconductor device and said at least one functional unit is a  
3 basic logic element or a basic logic circuit constructed by combining a plurality of said  
4 basic logic elements.

1 20. (Original) The development-support system according to Claim 10,  
2 wherein said system is a semiconductor device and said functional unit is a central  
3 processing unit, storage device, buffer, and peripheral device and wherein a file of said  
4 peripheral device is so constructed as to be able to select either of a file to implement its  
5 function by using hardware or a file to implement its function by using software.

1 21. (Original) The development-support system according to Claim 10,  
2 wherein said system is software and said functional units are routines or objects to perform  
3 predetermined processing.

1 22. (Currently Amended) A storage medium storing system development  
2 control ~~program~~ programs for causing a computer to execute functions of a development-  
3 support system comprising:  
4 a server used to provide information about functional units each implementing a  
5 different function and files describing said different function,  
6 at least one developer client to develop said functional units:  
7 at least one user client to develop a system configured to perform desired  
8 operations by combining said functional units; and  
9 wherein all of said server, said at least one developer client, and said at least one  
10 user client are connected through an internet,



11            wherein said at least one user client obtains files of a plurality of said functional  
12 units, develops said system by combining files of said plurality of functional units and  
13 checks operations of the developed system and, as a result, when said developed system  
14 does not operate properly due to a malfunction of any one of said functional units,  
15 transmits question information about said malfunction of said malfunctioning functional  
16 unit to said server,

17            wherein said server, ~~after having accepted~~  
18            ~~\_\_\_\_\_ accepts and registers~~ and ~~registered~~ said question information, said  
19 registering including storing said question information in association with said  
20 malfunctioning functional unit, and,

21            \_\_\_\_\_ transmits said question information to said developer client which  
22 developed ~~operated by said developer client of said~~ malfunctioning functional units,

23            wherein said developer client transmits reply information to said question  
24 information to said server,

25            wherein said server, ~~after having accepted~~  
26            ~~\_\_\_\_\_ and registered~~ accepts and registers said reply information, said registering  
27 including storing said reply information in association with said malfunctioning functional  
28 unit, and

29            transmits said reply information to said at least one user client, other user clients  
30 having registered for said malfunctioning function unit ~~or~~ and another developer client  
31 operated by a user having interests in said malfunctioning functional units.

32